

Knox Regional Communications Center Executive Board

Wednesday
October 21, 2020
2:00 p.m.

A meeting of the Executive Board of the Knox Regional Communications Center took place on **Wednesday, October 21, 2020 at 2:00 p.m.** via Zoom.

Executive Board members in attendance: Camden Fire Chief Chris Farley; Jesse Thompson, Union EMS; Adam Miceli, Rockland Fire/EMS; Ruston Barnard, Rockland Fire/EMS; Knox County EMA Director Ray Sisk; and Chief Deputy Patrick Polky. **Members absent:** *Rockland PD Chief Chris Young.*

Others in attendance: Communications Director Robert Coombs; Administrative Programs Coordinator Candice Richards; and Knox County Administrator Andrew Hart.

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| I. | 2:00 | Meeting Called To Order |
| II. | 2:01 | Action Items:
1. Review & Approval of 2021 Communications Budget |
| III. | 2:05 | Discussion Items:
1. Deputy Director's Position & Next Steps
2. Radio Equipment Updates |
| IV. | | Other Business |
| V. | | Adjourn |

I. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Chair Chris Farley at 2:05 p.m.

II. Action Items

1. Review & Approval of 2021 Communications Budget.

Director Coombs explained that his budget had been reviewed with Administrator Hart and Finance Director Kathy Robinson. There are no capital improvements in the 2021 – the plan is to cover improvements in the operating budget. Depending on what grants are able to be received he may have to do include a separate capital improvements list in 2022.

The issue of deputy director vs. supervisor decision won't affect the budget at this time but Chief Farley felt that the decision should be made about whether to have a deputy director or a 3rd supervisor before voting on the budget. There was a discussion about the pro's and con's of having one versus the other. It was suggested having a hybrid position between the two so there would be a higher level of management present when Director Coombs was not physically at the center. Director Coombs said he had considered that possibility but wasn't sure how that would work.

It was discussed that the Executive Board had originally felt a deputy director was needed for several reasons but the makeup and atmosphere in the Center is different with Director Coombs in charge. Morale has improved significantly and Director Coombs is at the Center to provide guidance and leadership. Administrator Hart said that he supported the idea of having a 3rd supervisor instead of a deputy director so there would be better supervisory coverage, and didn't think the Budget Committee would have an issue with switching focus. The Sheriff's Office has tried out some changes with supervisor positions to see how they'd work and the budget committee supported that. It was noted that

some dispatchers have expressed a preference of having a supervisor instead of a deputy director so there would be more supervisory coverage over the course of 24 hours.

Patrick Polky suggested trying an interim supervisor during this year and then in the 2022 budget make the position change if it turns out that's what worked. Chief Farley felt that made sense. Administrator Hart commented that position changes are up to the Commission, not the Budget Committee.

- Patrick Polky motioned to approve the 2022 Communications budget as presented. Adam Miceli seconded the motion. A vote was taken with all in favor.

III. Discussion Items

1. Deputy Director's Position & Next Steps.

[Item discussed under 2021 Budget discussion]

2. Radio Equipment Updates.

Director Coombs explained that it's likely the microwave system is starting to fail. The County is currently awaiting the new microwave system to come in – the order was placed with RCM on Sept 1st, RCM placed the order on Sept 3rd, and it's 6-8 weeks delivery from the time of order. RCM will program and test the system before coming to install it in November. The system is produced by Tate, which Director Coombs believes is a better product than Kenwood. It's a 50 Watt system. One piece of equipment won't get here until November 30th but RCM is still planning to do the install mid-November.

Director Coombs has been replacing some of the antennas on the towers. He had discovered that most of the previously installed receive-antennas are the wrong split. They are 150 – 157, which is good for some frequencies but the fire/ems receives at 158 so the antennas don't match up with what we're trying to use them for. This is why he is replacing the receiving antennas. Coggins and Benner Hill towners have been done and the County is already seeing some improved quality. He is working with RCM to start with the least expensive towers first since it's being payed for it out of the operating budget. The Ragged Mountain, Vinalhaven, and St. George towers will be done in the coming year.

Chief Farley suggested that Director Coombs send a letter to the end users to let them know what's happening; Director Coombs said he would do so.

IV. Other Business

There was none.

V. Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 3:03 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Candice Richards
Administrative Programs Coordinator